

# City Manager's

# Spotlight

October 2015 ~ Special Edition



**TERESA WILSON**  
**CITY MANAGER**

The City Manager's Spotlight provides details about what is happening in the City of Columbia in an effort to keep citizens informed about City operations. The Special Edition of the City Manager's Spotlight on October 2015 reflects on information and resources for those impacted by the flood. Get details on the City's Flood Repair Permitting Process, Columbia-Richland Alerts, FEMA Disaster Recovery Assistance, Scam Alerts and more.



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## FEMA DISASTER RECOVERY ASSISTANCE

# FEMA



To register for FEMA disaster recovery assistance, call 1-800-621-FEMA or visit [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov).

### FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers

A Disaster Recovery Center is a readily accessible facility where applicants may go for information about FEMA or other disaster assistance programs. As locations are updated, they will be available on the FEMA Disaster Recovery Center locator website at <http://asd.fema.gov/inter/locator/home.htm>.

The following FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers are now open:

#### **Main Library**

1431 Assembly St, Columbia, SC 29201

Phone: (803) 799-9084

Hours of Operation:

Mon-Thurs: 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Fri – Sat: 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Sun: 2 p.m. – 6 p.m.

#### **South East Library**

7421 Garners Ferry Rd, Columbia, SC 29209

Phone: (803) 776-0855

Hours of Operation:

Mon-Thurs: 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Fri – Sat: 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Sun: 2 p.m. – 6 p.m.

#### **Eastover Library**

608 Main St, Eastover, SC 29044

Phone: (803) 353-8584

Hours of Operation:

Mon-Thurs: 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Fri – Sat: 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Sun: CLOSED



## FLOOD REPAIR PERMITTING PROCESS



There are very important facts to be aware of before moving forward with any repairs to a flood-damaged home located in the floodplain. Taking steps without accurate information can cost time and money. Anyone making repairs to a flood-damaged structure in the City of Columbia needs to get a zoning and building permit from the Development Center. If using the service of a contractor, they must be licensed by the SC Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation. Visit the [Development Inspections](#) page for more information about the permitting process or call (803) 545-3483. Visit the [Floodplain Management](#) page for more information on the City's floodplain program.

### Temporary Walk-up Flood Repair Stations at Washington Square

The City of Columbia's floodplain office will be temporarily located in the Customer Service Lobby on the first floor of 1136 Washington Street. Staff will provide walk-up assistance to anyone needing to start flood repair work in the City. This service will be available during normal City business hours (M – F, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.).

The floodplain office will be set up in a series of stations to walk customers through the City's flood repair and rebuilding permitting process. Homeowners and contractors can learn whether their property is in a floodplain, pick up the permit application packet, determine their property value, have any questions regarding the application process answered, and submit their completed permit applications.

Free 2 hour parking will be available in the nearby Washington Square Parking Garage on levels 2A and 2B.

### Important Documents

#### [Flood Repair Permit Checklist and Informational Documents](#) (PDF)

- Permit Applications (all are required)
- [Application for a Permit to Develop in a Flood Hazard Area](#) (PDF)
- [Property Owners Forms](#)\* (PDF) – includes Application for Substantial Damage/ Substantial Improvement Review and Owner Substantial Damage/ Substantial Improvement Repair/ Reconstruction Affidavit\*
- [Contractor Forms](#)\* (PDF) – includes Contractor Substantial Damage/ Substantial Improvement Affidavit and Estimated Cost of Reconstruction/ Improvement\*

*\*Documents must be notarized*

### Contact Information:

Building Permits: Development Center 545-3420

Floodplain Manager: Ali Khan 545-3400, [lkhan@columbiasc.net](mailto:lkhan@columbiasc.net)

Building Codes: Jerry Thompson 545-3442, [jlthompson@columbiasc.net](mailto:jlthompson@columbiasc.net)

Planning questions: Krista Hampton 545-3425, [kmhampton@columbiasc.net](mailto:kmhampton@columbiasc.net)

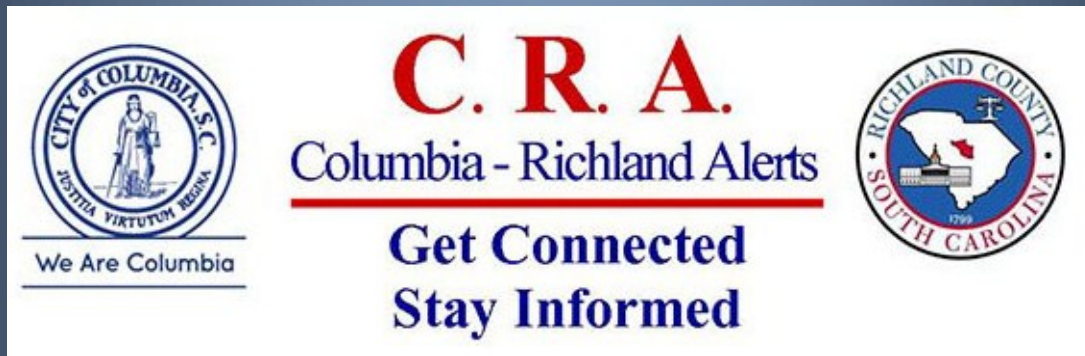
### Flood Repair Open Houses

The City of Columbia and Richland County flood repair assistance staff hosted joint open houses to answer questions about the flood repair process at multiple locations between Oct. 13 and Oct. 29, 2015.



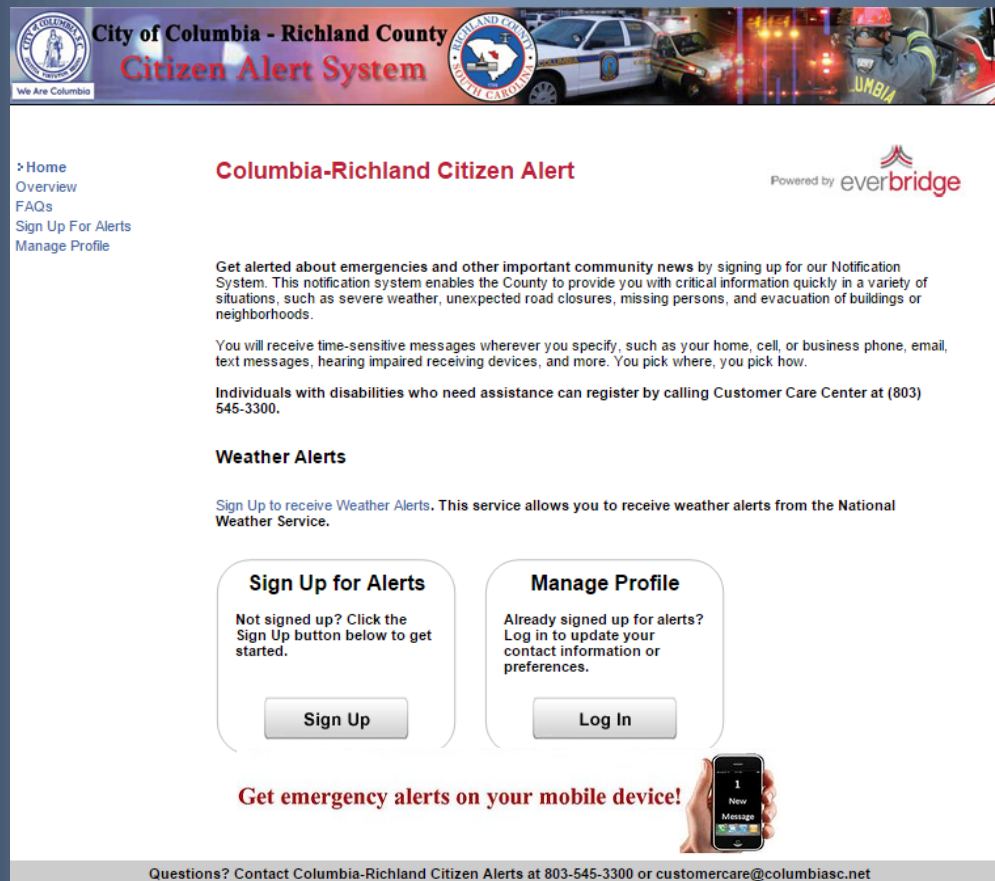
Do you have the green light to get a building permit for your flood-damaged property? [CLICK HERE](#)

## COLUMBIA-RICHLAND ALERT SYSTEM (CITIZEN ALERTS)



The City of Columbia and Richland County have launched an alert program designed to provide you with time-sensitive information for public safety and community awareness. To ensure that we can reach you with the information you need, when you need it, the notification system enables us to provide you with critical information quickly through a variety of contact preferences.

Click [HERE](#) to register for Columbia – Richland Alerts today!



Registration is easy and you can choose which updates you would like to receive.

- Public Safety
- Power Outage
- Missing Persons
- Community Events
- Road Closures
- Public Meetings/Hearings
- Traffic Safety
- Water/Sewer

## FLOOD VICTIMS CAUTIONED ABOUT POTENTIAL SCAMS



According to the Better Business Bureau (BBB), flood victims should be cautious of anyone claiming to be government workers with FEMA and stating that they are eligible for disaster grants or money. Scammers travel to disaster areas to take advantage of those who want life to go back to “normal.” Some may claim your insurance agent or FEMA sent them to your home or business. There is not a fee to apply for FEMA disaster assistance. Government workers will never ask for a fee or payment, and they wear an official government photo ID.

Before hiring a flood restoration specialist, do the following to avoid falling victim to a scam:

- Talk to your insurance agent (or FEMA) to find out about specific coverage and filing requirements. Victims should save all receipts, including those for food and temporary lodging.
- Research for details and free information on contractors you can trust at [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org) and consider using the BBB’s FREE online service [Quote](#) to obtain estimates, proposals or general information from BBB Accredited contractors.
- Get at least three different written estimates for repair work.
- Don’t automatically pick the lowest bid.
- Base all bids on the same criteria.
- Require the company to give you all guarantees in writing and a contract before the work begins. The contract should detail all of the work to be completed, the costs, a pay schedule, a projected completion date, and how to negotiate changes and settle disputes. Make sure the contract states who will obtain the proper permits.
- Ask the contractor for proof of general liability insurance and call the insurance company listed on the documents provided to make sure the contractor has an active policy.
- Avoid contractors who come to you unsolicited and try to pressure you into hiring their services, require a full payment upfront, or require you to obtain permits to complete work.
- Only issue the final payment for flood restoration work after a contractor finishes the job.
- Never pay with cash; Use a credit card or check.
- Read all agreements, guarantees, and instructions before signing. Do not be pressured into signing an agreement before you are ready and you understand all terms and conditions.

For more information, please visit <http://www.bbb.org/tulsa/news-events/news-releases/2015/05/bbb-cautions-flood-victims-of-scams/>



## CITY OF COLUMBIA INCIDENT RESPONSE BRIEF



For updates on the status of the City's response to the October 2015 flood, visit [ColumbiaSC.net](http://ColumbiaSC.net) to view the daily Incident Response Brief. The brief will be available through the first week of November 2015. Additional updates on the City's flood recovery will be provided via our website at [ColumbiaSC.net](http://ColumbiaSC.net) and the City's official [Twitter](#) & [Facebook](#).

### PET SAFETY AND MICROCHIP SCANNING SERVICES



The Columbia Animal Shelter advises pet owners to take precautionary measures to keep pets safe after the flood. Keep pets away from contaminated areas or areas filled with debris. Inspect the area around your house and yard for hazards such as sharp objects, dangerous materials and live wires. If a pet was lost during the flood please continue to check with the Columbia Animal Shelter daily.

Due to the recent flooding in the Midlands, there has been an unfortunate rise in displaced pets. The City and Richland County would like to remind residents that animal control/care officers are important resources who are available to help expedite the reuniting process and help pets trying to return home. Officers are equipped with microchip scanners and can be dispatched to your location to scan the lost pet to identify its home and family.

For more information regarding pet safety or microchip scanning services, please call the Columbia Animal Shelter at 803-776-PETS or Richland County at 803-929-6000.

## OCTOBER 2015 SC SEVERE STORMS AND FLOODING PROCUREMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The City's Purchasing Division began advertising the **October 2015 SC Severe Storms & Flooding DR4241 competitive procurement opportunities** on the [City of Columbia's Purchasing Division page](#) on Monday, Oct. 19, 2015. These procurement opportunities will be solicited for various commodities and services needed to support our disaster recovery efforts. The deadlines for receiving responses to our solicitations will depend upon several factors including, but not limited to, the urgency of the needed item or service, the source selection method, the potential contract value, etc. We strongly encourage you to visit our website often for new procurement opportunities and updates to recent postings.



The City of Columbia commits to using positive efforts in the procuring, contracting and hiring of disadvantaged and historically underutilized businesses and firms (small, minority-owned and women-owned businesses) in accordance with generally acceptable procurement standards and federal, state and local requirements. All businesses interested in doing business with the City of Columbia are strongly encouraged to respond to our procurement opportunities.

Our competitive procurements for our Disaster Recovery needs will fall in two primary categories:

**Small Procurements (Simplified):** Purchases and contracts for services established for goods and services with a potential contract value less than or equal to \$25,000.00. These small procurements will be posted on our website under "Procurement Opportunities" and will be solicited for a week or less.

**Large Procurements (Exceeds the Simplified Acquisition Threshold):** Purchases and contract for services established with a potential contract value in excess of \$25,000.00. Most of these competitive procurement opportunities will be available to be viewed on our website through our electronic bidding system, Bid Online, and bidder registration is required. You must also be properly registered prior to the submittal deadline to respond to procurements over the Simplified Acquisition Threshold\*.

All interested prospective bidders and potential Respondents for both categories above are strongly encouraged to register through Bid Online. Our database is also used as a resource tool to provide us with a listing of potential suppliers of goods and services to assist us with our citywide operations.

In addition to our City's website and Bid Online, the large dollar valued procurements will also be advertised in the South Carolina Business Opportunities (SCBO) newsletter. If you have any questions, please contact the City of Columbia's Purchasing Division at (803)545-3470.

To access Bid Online, visit the [City of Columbia's Purchasing Division page](#).

\*The Simplified Acquisition Threshold as referenced in Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 13.003 (b)(i) is \$150,000.00. Since the City of Columbia's procurement thresholds are more stringent, \$25,000.01 is the Simplified Acquisition Threshold for all flood related procurements.



OCTOBER 2015 FLOOD RECOVERY PHOTOS





## ABOUT TERESA WILSON

Teresa Wilson is the City Manager for the City of Columbia, SC. For more details on the City Manager, visit [www.ColumbiaSC.net/City-Manager](http://www.ColumbiaSC.net/City-Manager). For more information about the City of Columbia, visit [www.ColumbiaSC.net](http://www.ColumbiaSC.net).

*Please do not hesitate to contact me with your concerns, suggestions and hopes for our City. I take pleasure in my service to each of you!*

*All my best,*

*Teresa Wilson*



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